

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The rejections presented in the Office Action dated September 30, 2008 (hereinafter Office Action) have been considered. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8-17, and 19-35 remain pending in the application. Reconsideration of the pending claims and allowance of the application in view of the present response is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-24 and 26-33 were rejected based on 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2004/0201448 by Wang (hereinafter “Wang”) and further in view of U.S. Publication No. 2004/0018839 by Andric et al. (hereinafter “Andric”).

The Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims as previously presented are not rendered obvious in view of the combination of Wang and Andric. Applicants maintain the previously asserted arguments (e.g., in the After Final Office Action Response filed December 30, 2008) that combination of Wang and Andric fails to teach or suggest all of the features of the claims. However, in order to facilitate prosecution of the application and in a *bona fide* attempt to advance the application to allowance, the Applicants present this response with amendment to clarify particular aspects of the claimed invention.

For example, Claim 1 has been amended to at least set forth that, in response to receiving association request data transmitted from a wireless node, association ID data is selected from a numerical range exclusively allocated to a controller. The controller determines that association IDs of incoming wireless signals are within the numerical range, and in response thereto, uses the stored association ID data to identify the incoming wireless signals as coming from the wireless node. Similar amendments have been made to independent Claims 17, 23, 29, and 30. These amendments are fully supported in the Application as filed (e.g., Specification p. 7, lines 1-19) and no new matter has been added. Also, Claims 30-33 have been changed from system claims to controller apparatus claims, and such changes are fully supported in the Application as filed (e.g., FIGS. 1, 3, and 5).

Applicants submit that the combination of Wang and Andric fails to teach or suggest the use of numeric ranges for an allocating association IDs or in determination of a source of incoming wireless signals or messages. For example, in the rejection of now cancelled Claim 18, Wang at paragraphs 0023-0024 was relied upon to show storing range limits for association IDs of wireless nodes assigned to the controller. These paragraphs state, in their entirety:

[0023] Each local control master LCM and the system components B, S and R to which it is linked collectively forms a local-area network (LAN). A master-slave wireless linking is established between each local control master LCM and the components B, S and R. This is achieved by including a master device in each LCM and including a slave device in each of the components B, S, and R. Similarly, a master-slave wireless linking may be established between the central master CM and each of the local control masters LCM by including a master device in the CM and a slave device in each LCM.

[0024] Generally, each local control master LCM functions to establish and coordinate operation of the respective LAN by, for example, identifying the slave devices within the LAN, initiating communications, and collecting information communicated within the respective LAN. Such collected information facilitates the formation of a wide-area network including several or all of the LANs and enables the association of a substitute remote control R to a LAN in the event that an original remote control becomes lost or inoperable

It should be readily apparent that this excerpt of Wang neither teaches nor suggests the use of range limits by any of the system components, nor are such range limits taught or suggested anywhere else in Wang or Andric. For at least this reason, then, independent Claims 1, 17, 23, 29, and 30 are allowable over the Wang/Andric combination.

Each of claims 2, 4, 5, 8-16, 19-22, 24, 26-28, and 31-33 depend from one of independent Claims 1, 17, 23, and 30, respectively. While the Applicant does not acquiesce to the particular rejections to these dependent claims, it is believed that these rejections are now moot in view of the remarks made in connection with independent Claims 1, 17, 23, and 30. These dependent claims include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, and recite additional features which further distinguish these claims from the cited references. Moreover, if an independent claim is nonobvious under 35 U.S.C. §103, then any claim depending therefrom is nonobvious. (*In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988)). Therefore, dependent Claims 2, 4, 5, 8-16, 19-22, 24, 26-28, and 31-33 are not made obvious by Wang, even in combination with Andric.

Claim 25 is rejected based on 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Wang in view of Andric and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,349,883 to Simmons et al. (hereinafter "Simmons"). Claim 25 depends from independent Claim 23. While the Applicant does not acquiesce to the particular rejection to this dependent claim, it is believed that the rejection is now moot in view of the remarks made in connection with independent Claim 23. Consistent

with *In re Fine*, dependent Claim 23 is not made obvious by Wang, even in combination with Andric and Simmons.

Finally, Applicants note the addition of dependent Claims 34 and 35. These claims are also fully supported in the Application as filed, and are allowable over the cited art at least due to their dependence from Claims 30 and 1, respectively. Entry and allowance of Claims 34-35 is therefore respectfully solicited.

Authorization is given to charge Deposit Account No. 50-3581 (HONY.015PA) any necessary fees for this filing. If the Examiner believes it necessary or helpful, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney to discuss any issues related to this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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